

LEGISLATIVE BILL 495

Approved by the Governor April 11, 2000

Introduced by Stuhr, 24; Baker, 44; Bohlke, 33; Brashear, 4; Bromm, 23; Connealy, 16; Coordsen, 32; Dierks, 40; Engel, 17; Hartnett, 45; Hudkins, 21; Jones, 43; Kremer, 34; Matzke, 47; D. Pederson, 42; C. Peterson, 35; Price, 26; Raikes, 25; Robak, 22; Schellpeper, 18; Schimek, 27; Schmitt, 41; Schrock, 38; Suttle, 10; Thompson, 14; Vrtiska, 1; Wickersham, 49

AN ACT relating to education; to adopt the Education and Career Preparation Act; to create a task force; to provide a termination date; and to declare an emergency.

Be it enacted by the people of the State of Nebraska,

Section 1. Sections 1 to 8 of this act shall be known and may be cited as the Education and Career Preparation Act.

Sec. 2. The Legislature finds that technology is changing the educational and training needs of employees. These changes are found in all areas of employment and are directly related to Nebraska remaining competitive in a global economy. These changes also raise employer expectations of prospective employees from all education levels, including those with a baccalaureate degree. Education and career preparation are critical because students must possess academic, communication, and technological skills needed for employment and continued lifelong learning. Therefore, there is an urgent need for quality career preparation and technical education programs in the secondary schools of Nebraska in order to assist students in:

(1) Acquiring the knowledge and skills necessary for successful entry into a career preparation program at a postsecondary educational institution or into employment;

(2) Developing skills to balance the dimensions of work, family, and community;

(3) Gaining exposure to a wide variety of careers; and

(4) Gaining experience in career paths through supervised work-based experience.

Sec. 3. The purpose of the Education and Career Preparation Act is to study the academic, technical, and employment skills necessary for success in a career through career preparation and technical education programs such as agricultural education, business education, career guidance and counseling, family and consumer sciences, industrial technology education, marketing education, health occupations education, and diversified occupations.

Sec. 4. The Education and Career Preparation Task Force is created. The task force shall consist of the members appointed pursuant to section 5 of this act. The task force shall report its findings and recommendations to the Clerk of the Legislature and the Education Committee of the Legislature on or before October 1, 2000.

Sec. 5. Members of the Education and Career Preparation Task Force shall be appointed by the Executive Board of the Legislative Council on or before April 15, 2000, and shall include:

(1) One member of the Education Committee of the Legislature;

(2) One member of the Business and Labor Committee of the Legislature;

(3) The Commissioner of Education or his or her designee;

(4) One representative from the Governor's Policy Research Office;

(5) One secondary teacher involved in career preparation and technical education programs;

(6) One teacher who is a member of an association for career preparation and technical education teachers;

(7) One representative from business;

(8) One representative from labor;

(9) The program manager for vocational education at the State Department of Education;

(10) One representative from the State Department of Education who works with student organizations in the area of career preparation and technical education;

(11) One high school student leader involved in student organizations in the area of career preparation and technical education;

(12) One representative of an association of school boards;

(13) One taxpayer from a Class II or III school district;

(14) One representative of an association of school administrators;

(15) One taxpayer from a Class IV or V school district;

(16) One representative from a community college who is involved in career preparation and technical training; and

(17) One representative of a career preparation and technical education teacher education program.

Members of the task force shall be reimbursed for their actual and necessary expenses incurred in carrying out their duties as members of the task force as provided in sections 81-1174 to 81-1177. The member from the Education Committee of the Legislature shall be the chairperson of the task force and shall arrange for the initial and subsequent meetings. The Education Committee of the Legislature, other legislative staff, and the State Department of Education shall provide research and administrative support for the task force. The task force may retain a national consultant to assist with the study.

Sec. 6. The Education and Career Preparation Task Force shall study the following topics and make recommendations for Nebraska policies and potential legislation to the Clerk of the Legislature and the Education Committee of the Legislature:

(1) The purpose, role, and mission of career preparation and technical education programs;

(2) The prevalence of and need for career preparation and technical education programs at both the middle school and high school levels;

(3) The funding for career preparation and technical education programs, curriculum, and equipment at both the middle school and high school levels;

(4) The availability of teachers of career preparation and technical education and the status of career preparation and technical teacher education programs;

(5) The need for career preparation and technical education articulation programs in high schools and postsecondary educational institutions;

(6) The feasibility of operating different delivery systems for career preparation and technical education programs, including a career preparation and technical high school or schools; and

(7) Any other topics related to career preparation and technical education as determined by the task force.

Sec. 7. The Education Committee of the Legislature shall hold at least one public hearing in each congressional district in Nebraska on the recommendations of the Education and Career Preparation Task Force before December 31, 2000.

Sec. 8. The Education and Career Preparation Task Force terminates on December 31, 2000.

Sec. 9. Since an emergency exists, this act takes effect when passed and approved according to law.